Spurring IT Innovation—
Are You Ready for Independence?

Presenters:

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Spurring IT Innovation—
Are You Ready for Independence?

Session Description

- Explore NPC networks separate from VA

- Examples at big & small NPCs

- Useful information without severing ties

- Having the best of both worlds

- No discussion specifically about QuickBooks
  - There's another session for that

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Working on the VA Network

Pros

- No cost for computers, internet access, support

Cons

- "Your" email and files on VA network are not yours!
  - May not have access when you really need it – like in a lawsuit

- Some programs and websites not supported by VA

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Independence Sounds Great, but…

- Need access to resources on VA network

So, I'm stuck, right?

- No! You can have it all!
  - You can try it out without taking drastic moves

- We'll describe how Charleston and Palo Alto have done it & give other options

Options for NPCs of Any Size

- **Start with TechSoup**
  - Go to TechSoup.org and sign up
  - A nonprofit assisting nonprofits & libraries with Information Technology
    - Hardware, software at very good prices
    - Emergency tech support, strategic planning & fully managed IT services
  - Membership may not go through automatically
    - Phone call got us approved based on relationship to Veterans

- **Pricing works several ways**
  - Companies like Microsoft donate; you pay admin fee to TechSoup
    - Usually annual limits on number of each product
  - Small fee to TechSoup to access discounts, e.g., to Dell products
  - Hybrids: Donated hardware, pay vendor for service

Options for NPCs of Any Size - TechSoup

- Companies providing donations/discounts have their own eligibility criteria – and they change them!
  – Adobe's rules changed; too much revenue; then we could get limited donations; now back to excluded

- Favorite TechSoup Offerings
  – Mobile Beacon Hotspots
    - Unlimited 4G LTE data; they say up to 10 devices can connect
    - Admin fee **$18** each for hardware
    - Pay Mobile Beacon directly **$120**/year/hotspot in advance
    - Get up to 11 devices per year
    - Meant to be used as mobile devices – don't leave plugged in all the time

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More Favorite TechSoup Offerings

- ## Microsoft Products
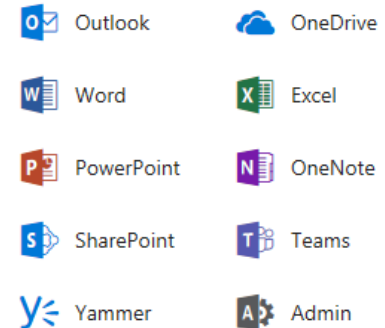 - Office 365 Subscriptions
    - Always get latest version of Office
    - Admin Center to manage Users and Groups
    - Choose subscription – Office 365 E2, E3 or E5
      - E2 licenses are **free**; email account and online versions of Office
      - E3 costs **$4.50**/month/user: E2 plus each E3 user can install Office on up to 5 PCs or Macs, 5 tablets, and 5 smartphones
      - E5 is **$15.00**/month/user: Advanced security plus Power BI & Delve Analytics
    - Use OneDrive and SharePoint for file sharing
  - Office Standard edition (desktop) for **$29**
    - Combine with E2 license to get email service
    - No upgrades

PAVIR does this →

Outlook   OneDrive
Word   Excel
PowerPoint   OneNote
SharePoint   Teams
Yammer   Admin

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More Favorite TechSoup Offerings

- Microsoft Products
  - Microsoft Server and SQL Server licenses donated
    - **$53** Admin fee to TechSoup for Windows Server 2012
      - Microsoft sent donation receipt for **$1,324**
    - Software for 2 servers for **$851**
      - Microsoft sent donation receipt for **$20,982**

- Hardware – Both refurbished & new
  - Computers, headsets, networking equipment

- Free Assistance choosing products

- Fee-based services for managing your IT

Regarding the VA Network

- Need access to VA network for
  - Submitting work orders
  - Reserving conference rooms
  - Accessing local policies

- VA R&D has a workstation available for users

- Citrix Remote Access is my preferred option for accessing VA network
  - Official VA supervisor (in Palo Alto, ACOS) approves request
  - Download Citrix software
  - Work at my desk toggling between the two networks

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Having it All

- Get remote access to VA network

- Get registered with TechSoup
  - Hotspot & service
  - Sign up for Office 365

- Buy a laptop

- Try it out for a very small investment

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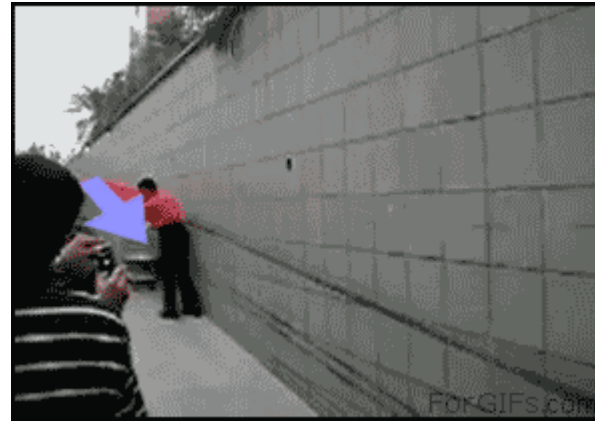
Now let's hear about Charleston's experience…

What prompted CRI to get off the VA Network?

Shopping List:

- Furniture
- Utilities
- Property Insurance
- Telephones
- Computers
- Printers
- Software including encryption and antivirus
- Backup server
- Internet and telephone service
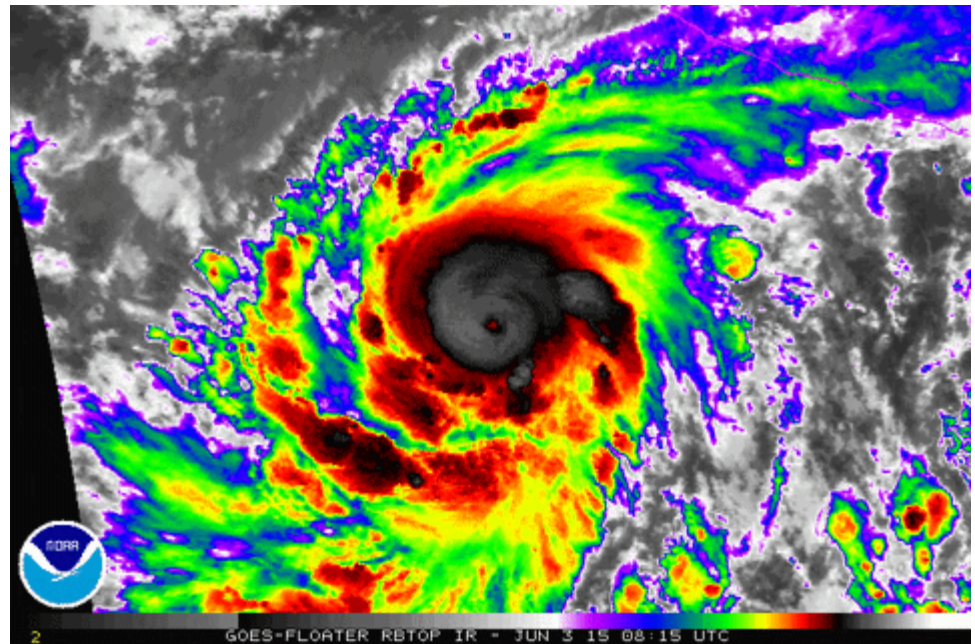- Outsourced IT support

IT Decisions

1. What to buy?
2. Will VA Information Security Officer (ISO) approve it?
3. Who is providing IT support?

Moving to the cloud

- Property insurance cancelled
- Remote offsite virtual server
- IT contract
- Cost: $120/month

Computer Security Policy

Charleston Research Institute
Policy Memorandum

Title: Computer Security Policy
Reviewed by: Board of Directors
Implementation Date: 11/14/2016
Next Scheduled Review Date: 11/14/2019
Approval: Amanda C. LaRue, Ph.D., Chairperson

Policy Statement:
Off-site managed servers are utilized, backed-up daily, and monitored periodically with access to the accounting system limited to the administrative employees required to use it.

Background:
CRI electronic data files are located on a remote server through Atlantic Computer Company systems using Sonicwall NSA firewalls which are fully compliant with FIPS 140-2.

Guidelines:
CRI uses passwords to restrict access to accounting software and data. Only duly authorized accounting personnel with data input responsibilities have passwords that allow access to the system. They are also are expected to keep their passwords secret.

User access to QuickBooks is restricted to the Executive Director and bookkeeper. Access to back-up files shall be limited to individuals authorized by management. Backups are regularly made on a daily basis.

Fast Forward to 2017

Verizon Government Contract

verizon✓

Nationwide Calling Plans:

Price Plan	Minutes/Data Per Line (a)	Monthly NVLPT Charge Per Line (b)
Nationwide Domestic Mobile Broadband	Unlimited	$39.99

Equipment Offers:

Equipment	Full Retail Price	NVLPT Equipment Price
Verizon Jetpack MiFi 7730L	$199.99	$0.00**
Totals		

- Verizon has a government contract and will extend the same pricing to the VA NPC's
- Equipment was FREE-$0 cost
- Unlimited data allowance

2019...Time To Upgrade!

Costs

- Wireless cradlepoint router is $1,250 to purchase, plus $40/mo with Verizon cellular service
- Dell desktop computers with Windows 10
- Microsoft Office 365 Business Premium Enterprise subscription
- Advanced email security with secure archiving
- GoDaddy cost for Office 365, website hosting, and 2 email accounts is $900/year

Next Steps

- Have IT company perform a HIPAA audit of our systems once installed-treat CRI like a physician's medical office practice
- Request VA ISO perform a vulnerability assessment of our system to make sure we match VA standards

Challenges

- Cash outlay for equipment
- IT Support Team
- VA ISO
- HIPAA and Consent Forms
- Staying Current
- Protecting Veterans Information

ALL ABOARD THE STRUGGLE BUS

Benefits

- NPC has rights and ownership of NPC email and data
- Update and purchase programs as needed
- Relocate office and telework easily

Palo Alto's experience may not be relevant to you, but may give you some ideas…

IT Setup in Palo Alto

- PAVIR & VAPAHCS have an **MOU for air-gapped network**
  - No PAVIR equipment physically touches VA network
  - No PII /PHI is transmitted
  - Amended this year to add the PAVIR wireless network
  - Signed by CEO, local VA IT Manager, ISSO & Privacy Officer

Security

- Enterprise versions of antivirus and encryption software
  - "Enterprise" means that we can manage it from our server
  - All our computers are encrypted, not just laptops

- Two factor authentication for email and remote access
  - Sends a one-time password to your phone
  - Set up for email through Office 365
  - All Office 365 mail is encrypted, but you can add another layer

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IT Setup in Palo Alto

- Ports in wall connect to a PAVIR switch
  - PAVIR switch in a locked enclosure in telephone closet
- Fiber to VA Data Center in basement
- AT&T broadband service - **$800**/month for 50MB
  - Connection in basement telephone room goes to
    - PAVIR rack in VA Data Center
    - Our suite of offices upstairs
- Technology Partner – was referred from CPA firm
  - Same company for 20 years
  - Engineer on our account for 18 years
  - Costs: **$280**/month/server – monitor and keep updated
  - **$12.95**/month to host www.pavir.org
  - **$400**/month for offsite backup
  - Network & desktop support at **$170**/hour

IT Setup in Palo Alto – End Users

- Virtual drives with role-based security via Active Directory on the server
  - We all have access to the P drive
  - HR has a drive for confidential information
  - We each have a U drive
    - Backed up & also available on that computer – "Always available offline"

- Telecommuting & Remote Workers
  - Staff not in our office log on thru Sonicwall NetExtender VPN
  - Access our shared drives and our Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software, Microsoft Dynamics SL

- Laptops for those who may need to work remotely
  - Docking stations for monitor, keyboard & mouse
  - Desktop computers for others (much cheaper)

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IT Setup in Palo Alto – Moving to the Cloud

- Microsoft also provides nonprofit pricing directly
  - $3,500 annual credit to Azure (cloud platform)

- Servers in Azure – only cost when they are on
  - One server in Azure is the last version of our ERP (before upgrade)
  - Another has our next version of requisition software, ReQlogic
  - Encryption server
    - Workstations don't need it to do their job
    - Only needed for managing users and computers

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IT Setup in Palo Alto – PAVIR Wireless!

- Last March we added wireless service to our network
  – Wireless Access Points are hardwired to our switch in the closet

- Staff formerly used hotspots in conference rooms
  – Not great; had to remote into our network

- Now we can disconnect a laptop from its dock and we're automatically on the secure PAVIR wireless network
  – Network recognizes our computers
  – Guest network for visiting vendors and for researchers using our conference rooms

- VA Approval for wireless
  – No one could think of a reason to say No
  – No one wanted to say Yes
  – Told us to use 5G because VA is 2.4G and don't know when they'll change

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IT Setup in Palo Alto – Server Room specifics

- PAVIR's rack in VA Data Center houses all our servers and networking equipment
  - One server for domain controller (network permissions) & shared files
  - One for our Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software, Microsoft Dynamics SL & related products ReQlogic and KnowledgeSync
  - Four servers for tick@lab software for the VAPAHCS animal program
  - Not on PAVIR's network, but using our broadband, the server for RDIS Palo Alto database and website
  - Backup unit which syncs with twin unit at our technology partner
  - SonicWall firewall and an appliance providing secure mobile access via Virtual Private Network (VPN)

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Questions?